United Nations S/PV.4982

Security Council

Fifty-ninth year

Provisional

4982nd meeting

Thursday, 3 June 2004, 4 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Baja	(Philippines)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Baali
	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Benin	Mr. Adechi
	Brazil	Mr. Sardenberg
	Chile	Mr. Muñoz
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	France	Mr. de La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Pakistan	Mr. Akram
	Romania	Mr. Motoc
	Russian Federation	Mr. Konuzin
	Spain	Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United States of America	Mr. Negroponte

Agenda

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

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04-37379 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 4.20 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

The President: Pursuant to the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and with the consent of the Council, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation to His Excellency Mr. Hoshyar Zebari, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, to participate in the meeting, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Zebari (Iraq) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: I welcome the presence at this meeting of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, His Excellency Mr. Hoshyar Zebari. At the end of the briefing, I will give the floor to Council members who wish to make comments or ask questions. As there is no list of speakers for this meeting, I would invite Council members who wish to take the floor to so indicate to the Secretariat as from now.

I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, His Excellency Mr. Hoshyar Zebari.

Mr. Zebari (Iraq): On Tuesday, 1 June, the people of Iraq took the first step towards regaining their full sovereignty and independence. United Nations special envoy Lakhdar Brahimi supervised the introduction of a new interim Iraqi Government to assume authority on 30 June, which marks a major success in Iraq's transition towards democracy and towards ending the legal occupation of our country.

The formation of the interim Government was the result of an extensive consultation process promoted by Mr. Brahimi, who, despite the security constraints, travelled throughout Iraq to solicit the views of all sectors of Iraqi society. Over the past months, the Secretary-General's special envoy, the Iraqi Governing Council and the Coalition Provisional Authority were engaged in an exercise of broad national consultation that included public meetings and that reached out to tribal, religious and community leaders, political parties from inside and outside the Governing Council, prominent individuals and women's groups, among others. The selection of the interim Government was based on merit and qualifications, with an element of political and social balancing. While it represents the vast majority of the people of Iraqi society, it would have been impossible to include the more than 400 political parties and associations that have mushroomed to date in the new and free Iraq.

I would like to thank the United Nations, Member States and Secretary-General Kofi Annan for their support and assistance in the formation of the interim Government. I am grateful in particular for the ongoing efforts of Mr. Brahimi, who has been an excellent facilitator in achieving this successful outcome.

This process, in our view, was reasonably legitimate and decent. We cannot say that it was totally perfect, but I think the outcome will prove in the days ahead to have been the best there could be under the current circumstances.

Today I would urge the continued support of the international community through the adoption of a new draft Security Council resolution to endorse the establishment of the sovereign interim Government. I urge the Council to adopt such a draft resolution as soon as possible, to support the ongoing political process, reaffirm the need for Iraq to control its own resources and recognize Iraq's need for the continued presence of a multinational force in partnership with the Iraqi authorities.

We strongly welcome and encourage adoption of the positive text of the draft resolution, now under consideration, and hereby present our views and proposed amendments so that the draft resolution may correspond more fully to the wishes and aspirations of the Iraqi people. Iraq's views must be represented and heard by all, as this draft resolution will be an endorsement of the democratic process that the Iraqi people have chosen to pursue, and as it is their interests that lie at the heart of it.

We seek a new and unambiguous draft resolution that underlines the transfer of full sovereignty to the people of Iraq and their representatives. The draft resolution must mark a clear departure from Security Council resolutions 1483 (2003) and 1511 (2003), which legitimized the occupation of our country. By removing the label of occupation we will deprive the terrorists and anti-democratic forces of a rallying point to foment violence in our country.

We expect that the draft resolution will endorse a genuine and comprehensive transfer of power on 30 June. This means investing full authority in the interim Government to run Iraq's affairs, make its own decisions and have authority over Iraq's security matters. This transfer of sovereignty must also authorize the interim Government to control, administer and manage Iraq's resources and assets. Iraq must have a leading role in mechanisms agreed upon by the Security Council to monitor disbursement of its resources.

We recognize that the formation of the interim Government is a milestone in the broader political process as defined in the 15 November agreement, which I presented to the Council in December 2003. In that respect, the Transitional Administrative Law, which defines the interim law during this transitional period, is fundamental to the political process. From now until the end of 2005, the Transitional Administrative Law will be the only legal framework and the interim arrangement that reflects the wishes of the majority of the Iraqi people for a free, united and democratic Iraq.

Principles enshrined in the Transitional Administrative Law reflect Iraq's path of reform and democratization; the Law regulates the working of the interim and transitional Governments. Our brothers in the League of Arab States welcomed the passing of the Transitional Administrative Law, and we urge the Security Council to endorse and acknowledge this important and historic document.

The continued support of the United Nations for the political process is critical to help us meet the challenges ahead. Here, I would like to outline further steps taken to ensure a more inclusive process.

In order to further broaden participation, there are plans to hold a national conference — hopefully in July 2004 — to allow all those parties and individuals who wish to be represented to have their say in the democratic process. A preparatory committee has already been identified for the conference. An electoral commission has also been established to supervise elections, with the help and support of experts from the United Nations. Part of the mandate of the caretaker Government is to work closely with the United Nations and its agencies to prepare for general elections to be held in 2005. To achieve this, we seek the continued advice and support of the United Nations and call upon the Member States to assist Iraq in ensuring security conditions conducive to holding elections.

In this respect, we Iraqis are grateful to the coalition that helped liberate us from the persecution of Saddam Hussein's regime. We thank President Bush and Prime Minister Blair for their dedication and commitment to this mission and we recognize the sacrifices of all coalition forces in helping the people of Iraq realize a stable, free and democratic Iraq. We must also recognize the sacrifices made by our people in this noble cause. The overthrow of the former regime led to the total collapse of the State and its institutions and since April last year we have been working very hard to re-establish Iraq's security, military and police forces.

However, we have yet to reach the stage of being able to maintain our own security and therefore the people of Iraq need and request the assistance of the multinational forces to work closely with Iraqi forces to stabilize the situation. I stress that any premature departure of international troops would lead to chaos and the real possibility of a civil war in Iraq. This would cause a humanitarian crisis and provide a foothold for terrorists to launch their evil campaign in our country and beyond our borders. The continued presence of the multinational force will help preserve Iraq's unity, prevent regional intervention in our affairs and protect our borders at this critical stage of our reconstruction.

It is an objective reality in Iraq today that we require the continued assistance and partnership of these troops, but we also need this presence to be regulated under arrangements that compromise neither the sovereignty of the interim Government nor the right of the multinational force to defend itself. Iraqi forces must be under Iraqi command, but operate in liaison and partnership with the multinational force to achieve this objective. The transitional Iraqi Government and the new Iraqi interim Government must have a say in

the future presence of these forces and we urge that this be reflected in the new draft resolution.

I would like to end by reminding the Security Council of the spirit of cooperation in the process of forming Iraq's new interim Government and the significance of its establishment. Of the 32 ministers, six are women, and the Government is the most representative of the Iraqi people in the history of our country. It is significant that the handover of power to the new Government was peaceful and entailed none of the bloodshed that has historically characterized the transfer of power in our region.

During the complex process of deliberation that preceded its formation, national reconciliation conferences were held in Arbil and Baghdad that were addressed by Special Adviser Brahimi. We are proud of the willingness of all parties involved to compromise and make neutral concessions for the greater good of a better future for all Iraqis. The endorsement of Grand Ayatollah Sistani also represents a very positive and important signal from the highly respected religious leader.

Political development in Iraq is progressive and increasingly inclusive and we remain steadfastly committed to the clear steps we must take towards elections in 2005. Only by following this course will we preserve Iraq's territorial integrity and unity and realize a peaceful and prosperous country for our people.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (spoke in Arabic): Allow me at the outset to welcome Minister Zebari to this important meeting of the Security Council. I thank him for responding to the Council's invitation to engage in a dialogue with us today and to share his views and vision regarding the future of Iraq and what, on the eve of the restoration of its sovereignty and independence, that sisterly country expects from the international community and, more specifically, from this Council in terms of assistance in building its national institutions and reconstructing its national economy.

Of course, we are very eager to see Iraq regain its full sovereignty and for its Government to exercise all its competencies and responsibilities and to manage all the country's internal and external affairs, including its security aspects, resources and wealth, especially in relation to the management of the Iraqi Development Fund. The statement made by Minister Zebari was on the right track in that respect and I thank him for the ideas, views and visions he outlined for us. We will spare no effort in addressing them constructively because, in the final analysis, the heart of the issue is Iraq's future. Iraq itself must be comfortable with and accept the draft resolution that our deliberations will lead to.

Thus, I should like to put several questions to Minister Zebari, which I hope will not prove too awkward for him.

First, does Minister Zebari feel that the present wording of paragraph 1 of the draft resolution guarantees the Government of Iraq all the authority necessary to exercising its sovereignty and functions and to conducting the internal and external affairs of the country, including security?

Secondly, does Minister Zebari believe that the wording of paragraph 6 of the draft resolution, relative to the exercise by the Iraqi Government of its authority over the Iraqi national security forces, is sufficiently strong? Does it really guarantee the full authority of Iraq over its forces? Is there a need to be more explicit in the wording of that paragraph?

Thirdly, how does the Minister view the relationship between the Iraqi Government and the multinational force? Does he believe that a letter to the Council is enough, or is there a need to refer to some of the general principles and specifically to note that the final say regarding the military operations of the multinational force falls to the Iraqi Government?

Fourthly and lastly, as the Minister has just come from Iraq and is more aware of conditions there, does the text of the draft resolution provide for the role that Iraq wants for the United Nations, or does Iraq have a different vision of that role?

Mr. Negroponte (United States of America): It is a pleasure to welcome Mr. Zebari back to the Council, this time in his capacity as the Foreign Minister of the Iraqi interim Government.

Iraq is poised to take a momentous step in its modern history. The new Government named earlier this week will assume full sovereignty this month, and in coming months it will have the responsibility and the authority for leading the people of Iraq to national elections by early next year. The work that lies ahead for Minister Zebari's Government is exhilarating in its promise for the future, but we are sure that that work will not be easy. He and his colleagues will be called

on to demonstrate their commitment to the people of Iraq at a difficult and dangerous time. Those who deploy terror in an attempt to snatch hopes for the future from the Iraqi people will continue, and perhaps even redouble, their insidious and vicious attacks. We are sadly but acutely aware that Mr. Zebari and his colleagues face personal risks by serving their country.

The United States warmly welcomes the formation of a Cabinet of distinguished Iraqi men and women who represent the breadth, talent and diversity of Iraqi society. As President Bush said on Tuesday, "The Government has the talent, the commitment and the resolve to guide Iraq through the challenges that lie ahead". The United States stands ready to assist the Government of Iraq in achieving the goal of a secure, democratic Iraq at peace with its neighbours. We look to Member States of the United Nations to join us in helping the people of Iraq to realize that vision.

We pay tribute to Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, for his tireless work in setting the stage for a new Prime Minister's leadership of the Iraqi people. Ambassador Brahimi engaged in a vibrant consultation with hundreds, and even thousands, of Iraqis representing the diversity of Iraq. We expect to see that process continue through the formation of a national council next month to advise and assist the interim Government.

Today, as Minister Zebari joins us, the Security Council is considering a draft text circulated by my delegation and that of the United Kingdom. The draft salutes the new moment that we are facing in Iraq's history: the occupation of Iraq will end, and the Iraqi people will assume full responsibility and authority for governing a proud and rich nation. The Council's timely adoption of that draft resolution will bear witness to a fundamental change in the relationship between the Security Council and Iraq after nearly 14 years since Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait.

We welcome Minister Zebari's presence here in New York, and we welcome Iraq's contribution to the exchange of views on the draft resolution under discussion. In the days ahead, my Government and our Multinational Force partners will engage the incoming Iraqi Government on a broad range of issues, and in particular on the nature of the security partnership between the Multinational Force and the Iraqi people. The United States is committed to supporting the new Iraqi Government in its work to bring lasting stability to Iraq and to allow for free national elections by the end of January 2005. This will be a true partnership founded on shared goals and tangible cooperation at all levels, from the soldiers on foot patrols to the highest levels of two sovereign Governments.

Our work in the Security Council to support the Iraqi people will not end with the adoption of this draft resolution or with the end of the occupation. We must confront with resolve and determination those who seek to deny the Iraqi people the opportunity for democratic self-government and those who seek to sow instability, fear and terror in Iraq. The United States will not flinch in this task. This is work that demands a shared effort from the international community, standing shoulder to shoulder with the Iraqi people and with the interim Iraqi Government as they move along the path to elections and to the development of capable institutions for governance and as they work to create a stable, peaceful and democratic future for their country.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation thanks Mr. Zebari for his briefing. This is the first time that the Security Council has heard from the representative of the interim Iraqi Government on the current situation in that country and on the new Council draft resolution. We hope to have more such opportunities.

As stated by Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the formation of the interim Iraqi Government symbolizes a new beginning. China welcomes the formation of the interim Iraqi Government, and we hope that that will soon lead to the restoration of full Iraqi sovereignty and to the stabilization of the situation in Iraq. We hope and trust that, with the broad support of the Iraqi people and the strong support of the international community, the interim Government will accomplish its mission smoothly.

The Security Council's timely adoption of the new draft resolution will be significant for Iraq's future development. To that end, all the parties have adopted constructive attitudes and have conducted in-depth consultations on the draft resolution concerning the Iraqi issue, as proposed by the United States and the United Kingdom.

We believe that the new draft resolution should send two clear signals. The first is the termination of the military occupation of Iraq to return full sovereignty to the Iraqi people. After 30 June, the

interim Iraqi Government will exercise full sovereignty in the political, economic, security, judicial and diplomatic areas. Secondly, the deployment and the mandate of the multinational force should effectively respect Iraqi opinion. Prior consultation and consent should be sought from the interim Iraqi Government on major military operations, to express the fact that the interim Government has full authority. In addition, the duration of the multinational force should be in keeping with the political process in Iraq.

We believe that, in our consultations on the draft resolution, we should listen to Iraq's opinions and to those of its neighbours. Only when we produce a good draft resolution that enjoys broader support will we be able to actually produce something that will be conducive to the stabilization of Iraq's security situation and to the smooth implementation of Iraq's reconstruction.

I would also like to take this opportunity to ask a number of questions of Foreign Minister Zebari. First, what are the expectations of the new interim Government of Iraq with regard to a new draft resolution? Does he have any suggestions in that regard? Secondly, what are the hopes of the interim Government regarding the specific role of the United Nations? And thirdly, what progress has been made with respect to the security agreement as negotiated by Iraq and the multinational force?

Mr. Pleuger (Germany): I would like to express our appreciation for the presence of our Secretary-General, at least at the beginning of this meeting, and, of course, we very much welcome the opportunity for an exchange of views on the content of the new draft resolution on Iraq with the old and new Foreign Minister, Mr. Zebari. We have been advocating this dialogue all along, because we firmly believe that the new Iraqi interim Government must have a say with regard to the framework that this draft resolution is going to provide for the months to come.

Germany, in the negotiations so far, has always been in favour of an overriding principle — that is, that the political process and the security architecture for this interim period should not be imposed on Iraq by the Security Council or by anyone else, even if it is done with the best of intentions. I think that it is fair to say that it is very important for the credibility of that interim framework that it is the result of direct consultations between the designated interim Government and the Security Council and is not just the result of bilateral arrangements or agreements.

We therefore support the idea expressed by other Council members in former meetings not to limit this dialogue with the representatives of the interim Government to a one-time event. Of course, we would also appreciate it very much if the new political leadership were willing to continue these discussions with the Council early next week.

The key issues with respect to the future draft resolution will, from our perspective, be twofold: first, it has to send a clear signal which marks a genuine break with occupation and thus generates the necessary acceptance among the Iraqi people; and secondly, it will have to define the respective roles and responsibilities of the interim Government, the multinational force and the former occupying Powers, and the United Nations, in their triangular relationship, in a manner that is consistent with the desired signal of a transfer of full sovereignty and authority.

We are fully aware that the presence of some 140,000 foreign troops and of several thousand foreign civilians has to be harmonized with the concept of a real and credible restoration of full sovereignty. While we acknowledge that the revised version of the American-British draft resolution is an honest attempt to achieve that reconciliation, we believe that there is still room for improvement towards a more credible restoration of Iraqi ownership and full sovereignty, in particular in three key areas of the text as it stands now.

My first point pertains to the transfer of sovereignty. In our view, it has be clear that full authority is transferred, and I think that I heard from the Foreign Minister as well as from the representatives of the Coalition that that is the intention. We feel that any restrictions that might arise in some areas should only be self-imposed restrictions that arise out of the character of the interim Government as a caretaker — as an interim Government.

My second point pertains to the duration of the mandate of the multinational force. We agree with what was said by the Foreign Minister and by Ambassador Negroponte that a premature withdrawal of troops would not be desirable, but we think that a deadline — that is, a specific date for the expiration of the force's mandate — is an important signal that should be included in the text, notwithstanding the possibility of renewing the mandate or of basing the presence of

foreign troops in Iraq subsequently on a different legal basis, such as a status-of-forces agreement.

Furthermore, the clear-cut right of the transitional Government to terminate the mandate earlier if it so wishes should be clarified in order to make clear the fact that it is a fully sovereign Government.

My third remarks pertain to the security architecture — the description of the general principles that will govern the sharing of security responsibilities between the interim Government and the multinational force — the partnership, as it was called by Ambassador Negroponte. That does not mean going into micromanagement, which should be left to the parties on the ground.

But I would like to pose two questions to the Foreign Minister in that respect. Which general principles does he think should be the determining factors in the relationship between the multinational force and his Government, especially if it comes to conflicting views on some issues? In that context, my second question is, the draft resolution refers to a request of his Government with regard to a further presence of the multinational force and to a multinational-force-related letter to the President of the Security Council. Could he inform us of its content or elaborate on the current state of affairs?

We would very much appreciate the views of his Government on those issues as well as on other aspects of the draft text. Of course, we understand that the interim Government has been designated only a few days ago and that it may not yet have had a chance to discuss all the aspects of the draft resolution in detail, but this, we feel, is an important draft resolution, and its message may well influence the acceptability of the political transition in Iraq. We are therefore deeply interested in his preliminary views today and look forward to an ongoing dialogue with those responsible in his country.

Mr. de La Sablière (France) (*spoke in French*): I am pleased to welcome Mr. Zebari and to congratulate him on his confirmation as Minister for Foreign Affairs. We have taken note of the formation of the Iraqi interim Government that will begin to function on 30 June. We hope that that Government will be fully successful in the very difficult task that will be facing it until the elections. France, for its part, is prepared to work with the Government of Iraq and to contribute to the economic and political reconstruction of the country.

I should also like to tell Mr. Zebari how useful his presence here today is. The Security Council has for several weeks been discussing a draft resolution that is crucial to the future of Iraq, and it must, of course, be fully aware of the views and expectations of the Iraqi authorities.

The discussions that we have been having in the Security Council for several weeks now have demonstrated, in my view, that all of its members share the same objective: the full and entire restoration of Iraqi sovereignty on 30 June; indeed, that is what Mr. Zebari told us earlier in his statement.

The Iraqi Government that has been formed should, as of 30 June, have full and complete authority in all areas.

Aside from the issue of its composition, we believe that the Government's credibility in the eyes of Iraqis will depend on its ability to govern fully and in complete independence. At the same time, we all know that — as Mr. Zebari has just said — maintaining a multinational force in Iraq will remain necessary for some time in order to help stabilize the country and assist Iraqis in assuming full responsibility for their security as soon as possible.

We do not think that those two demands are contradictory — not necessarily, at least. It is possible to reconcile the restoration of sovereignty with the maintenance of a significant foreign military presence. A sovereign Government and the multinational force can coexist, while respecting both the full authority of the Government and the operational effectiveness of the force.

However, from our point of view, it is not enough to decree that there be cooperation or a partnership between the Government of Iraq and the multinational force. Without getting into details and modalities, the general principles and parameters of that cooperation and partnership must be specified in the resolution. The Iraqi interim Government must have complete authority over its security forces and its armed forces. It is the Government's decision whether to make those forces available to the multinational force, if they deem it necessary or desirable to do so. The Iraqi forces should therefore not be engaged in the operations of

the multinational force without the consent of the Government of Iraq.

We also believe that the multinational force should carry out its mandate in close coordination with the Iraqi Government. The Iraqi Government's prior consent must be obtained for certain large-scale operations that could have significant political implications. Can we take the risk of repeating the Fallujah scenario, when one of the major challenges the new Government will face is the effort for national dialogue and reconciliation in the run-up to the elections.

We believe it is critical that the Iraqi Government — in any case, the Government resulting from the elections — be able to decide freely to terminate the mandate of the multinational force. That decision is up to it alone.

I note that the principles I have just mentioned have all been the subject of agreeing public statements by high-level leaders of the Coalition and of countries not belonging to the Coalition, including mine. It therefore seems that there is broad consensus on those principles. Given that situation, it should be possible to include those principles in the resolution under discussion if we deem it necessary to send a clear and credible signal to the people of Iraq that their Government will be fully responsible and that the temporary presence of the multinational force does not mean their sovereignty is being challenged.

Finally, it is the opinion and the expectations of the Iraqi people that should guide the Council's work. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq has already mentioned several of the points to which I have referred. We would be very grateful to him if he could provide us with further information on those points. We also hope that we will have the opportunity to continue our discussions with him. We were very happy about the exchange that we had this morning and about the exchanges that we will have with other Iraqi officials in coming days.

Mr. Muñoz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): First, I welcome the presence of Foreign Minister Zebari, who is with us in the Council again, but this time in a different capacity. It seems to us that his suggestions and recommendations are absolutely fundamental to adopting a good resolution on the future of Iraq in this very important period.

As he said, the first step in the political process has been taken with the appointment of the sovereign interim Government. As he said, it is the best possible result in the present circumstances. It is a compromise. Like all compromises, it is perhaps not the optimal situation, but it is based on reality. We agree with him that the key idea of the resolution that the Council adopts should be the full transfer of sovereignty to the Iraqis beginning on 30 June. We believe that the appointment of the interim Government is an important step in that direction, as well as in the timetable of the political transition towards full democracy.

This Government deserves a chance to carry out its specific tasks for a limited period. Now, the challenge falls upon us in the Security Council to prepare a good resolution that truly contributes to the full transfer of sovereignty to the interim Government, without ambiguity, with the greatest possible clarity and, if possible, with additional inputs from the Iraqi Government itself over the coming days.

We have already made considerable progress, but the text still needs to shed more light on the relationship between the sovereign interim Government and the multinational force. It must reaffirm the principles of international law and international humanitarian law. It must specify more clearly the end of the mandate of the multinational force, with the understanding that the force will be required for a significant length of time, as Minister Zebari himself indicated.

In that context, I would like to take this opportunity to ask three questions that might help the Council in its work of preparing the draft resolution.

First, in the stage prior to the selection of the interim Government, some criteria were set out with respect to the future interim Government of Iraq. In that connection, I would like to know whether the new Government adopted or considered the condition that individuals appointed as members of the interim Government could not be candidates in the elections scheduled for January of next year.

Secondly, I would like to know what, in the opinion of the Foreign Minister, are fundamental elements that would enable the interim Government to exercise its full authority in accordance with the sovereignty it will have as of 30 June. In other words, what are the indispensable components that comprise

full and complete sovereignty and that Mr. Zebari and others would like to see reflected in the resolution?

Finally, we have read in the press some statements attributed to members of the interim Government on the subject of security. For that reason, and picking up on Minister Zebari's own words referring to full control of the Iraqi forces, we would like to know whether the new Iraqi authorities hope to have such full and effective control of the country's armed forces and security forces. How do they hope to ensure coordination with the multinational force?

I would like to pose one more question, to which Minister Zebari should not feel obliged to respond. What policy will be adopted towards the militias that currently exist on the ground? That could be a problem for the political process that lies ahead.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): Since the inception of the crisis in Iraq last year, Pakistan has been guided by the interests and welfare of the Iraqi people — before the war, during the war and after the war. Following the war in Iraq, Pakistan pleaded for full respect for certain basic principles: Iraqi sovereignty and the interests of the Iraqi people; the unity and territorial integrity of Iraq; and Iraq's control over its own natural resources. We were glad that those principles were reflected in resolution 1483 (2003) and subsequent resolutions adopted by the Council.

As we all acknowledge today, Iraq is entering a new phase in its political existence. An interim Government has been formed, and it has claimed all the attributes of full sovereignty. As we have been advised, the formation of the interim Government, through a consultative process led by the Secretary-General and his special envoy, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, is a first step in the transition to a fully representative Government. The role of the United Nations and of Mr. Brahimi is, in our view, a vital one in fostering acceptance of the Iraqi interim Government within and outside the country.

The Government of Pakistan has welcomed the appointment of the interim Iraqi administration as a step towards restoration of a fully representative Government in the country. Pakistan hopes that Iraq, under the interim administration, will exercise full sovereignty, which will lend it credibility, protect Iraq's unity and territorial integrity and help restore security and stability in the country. Pakistan also hopes that the United Nations will play a central role in assisting the Iraqi people to exercise full sovereignty and to bring about the earliest possible restoration of security and stability and the reconstruction of their country.

We look forward to hearing a detailed report from Mr. Brahimi in the near future and to obtaining his evaluation of the situation and of future prospects. We listened with interest and attention to the statement made by Foreign Minister Zebari in the Security Council today. My delegation will be responsive to the views of the Iraqi interim Government in its consideration of the draft resolution which the Security Council is currently considering. In that context, I would like to offer some comments and pose a few questions to the Foreign Minister.

Foreign Minister Zebari mentioned that more than 400 political groups have mushroomed in Iraq; obviously not all of them are represented in the interim arrangements. We would like to know whether the interim Government intends to continue efforts to ensure the broadest possible inclusiveness of various political groups and to evoke the widest possible support from the Iraqi people.

Secondly, we have noted that the Iraqi interim Government wishes to have full authority; in that context we would like to inquire whether it would envisage any limitations on this authority through a self-imposed restraint. The people of Iraq, Foreign Minister Zebari has told us, need — and have requested the multinational force — to help stabilize the security situation. We would be grateful to learn his evaluation of the principal sources of the security threat faced by Iraq today. Secondly, does the interim Government have in mind any time frame with regard to the presence of the multinational force?

Foreign Minister Zebari also mentioned that the multinational force will have to be regulated and that a partnership will be established between the Iraqi authorities and the multinational force. We would like to know whether consideration has already been given to the nature of this partnership in the security sphere and whether the establishment of any mechanisms has been envisaged for the purposes of regulating that partnership.

Finally, I would like to leave a few questions for the Foreign Minister's consideration. Perhaps the Iraqi delegation could respond later if it cannot do so at the moment. These relate to the provisions in the draft resolution concerning the arms embargo and to the

international monitoring body over the Iraqi development fund. Does the interim Government feel that these provisions are consistent with the provision of full sovereignty and full authority to the Iraqi Government?

Finally, we expect that the interim Government will also soon establish contacts and consultations with its neighbours. We would be happy to learn of any plans for such contacts and cooperation, which we believe will enhance security and stability, both in Iraq and elsewhere in the region.

Mr. Konuzin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to Mr. Zebari for his statement.

On 1 June, the Iraqi interim Government was formed and the temporary Governing Council dissolved. Earlier, the Secretary-General briefed us on the results of the mission to Iraq of his special envoy, Mr. Brahimi. We look forward to the report of Mr. Brahimi himself.

Russia has always advocated the prompt restoration of the full sovereignty of Iraq. To do that, it is very important that the Iraqi people recognize the interim Government as the country's main political force. In that regard, my delegation welcomes what the Secretary-General has said in the Council's consultations, that the Iraqis themselves will need to judge their Government on the basis not of statements but of the Government's specific actions. My delegation also found another comment of the Secretary-General to be of value, that security in the country cannot be ensured by military means alone and that we must try to ensure that the most vocal Government critics are included in the upcoming national dialogue.

We hope that the interim Government will be able to make a significant contribution to establishing national institutions and a system of government and to meet challenges such as establishing internal stability, restoring the economy and the social infrastructure and establishing law and order. It is our view that the international community, led by the United Nations, must give as much assistance as possible to the people of Iraq to achieve those goals.

The Security Council is working on a draft resolution on Iraq. It is our job to ensure that the people of Iraq are united and sovereign once again and that there will be stability, democracy and economic prosperity in the country. We must be sure that we are acting in accordance with the views of the Iraqis and that we are not imposing our will on them. In that regard, we wish to hear from the interim Government specific ideas with respect to international assistance for Iraq, particularly in the political, economic, military and humanitarian areas. We will take those considerations into account in our future work on the Council's draft resolution on Iraq.

We also recommend that the head of the interim Government, with a number of ministers, come to New York to meet with the members of the Security Council. An alternative could be to hold a meeting in the region, which would give Iraq's neighbours an opportunity to participate actively in the dialogue with the Iraqi leadership.

Now I wish to ask several questions. First, what are the priority areas? According to which priorities does the interim Government wish to receive international assistance from the international community? What role could the United Nations play in that regard?

My second question concerns the situation regarding the file on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, as no weapons of mass destruction have been found. We believe that the draft resolution being prepared by the Security Council on Iraq must clearly answer the question of who will be responsible for searching for traces of weapons of mass destruction and for maintaining the safety of the sites and all materials found under the monitoring of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Mission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). What does the Minister think about the work of the IAEA and UNMOVIC being resumed simultaneous to the transfer of power to the interim Government in order to deploy in Iraq a long-term disarmament monitoring system based on Security Council resolutions?

My third question, which others delegations have already asked about, has to do with the interaction between the interim Government and the multinational force. And the last question: does the Minister believe it important to consider convening an international conference, possibly in several stages, as an instrument to provide a tool for the Iraqi settlement process? How does the Minister feel about that idea?

Mr. Motoc (Romania): I also heartily welcome the presence today in the Security Council of the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs, His Excellency Mr. Hoshyar Zebari. It is indeed the first opportunity, after the formation of the interim Government of Iraq, for the members of the Council to hear the views and the expectations of that Government about how the Council can best assist Iraqis transform their aspirations into realities.

I wish to take this opportunity to recognize the presence earlier of the Secretary-General.

The United Nations is also to be credited for having come as far as it has, listening today to such a forward-looking, self-confident vision statement by a proud representative of the new Iraq.

The Brahimi and Perelli missions have already produced a valuable outcome. My Government welcomed the formation of the interim Government on 1 June as an important step toward the transfer of full sovereignty to Iraq on 30 June. It was also the view that, with the interim Government in place, the political process in Iraq has entered a new and important stage. It is our sincere hope that the interim Government will be able to solidify thinking, keep the aspirations of the Iraqi people united and have a bold start in managing the most complex task ahead — the proper implementation of the political calendar in organizing free and fair elections in Iraq.

As far as we in the Security Council are concerned, I would like to restate once more Romania's resolve to promote the adoption of a new resolution on Iraq that best assists the daunting transformation processes in that country. Minister Zebari's comments earlier seem to indicate that we are on the right track. I wish to reassure Foreign Minister Zebari of Romania's firm commitment to continue to support the transitional processes under way in Iraq, in particular the stabilization efforts carried out by the multinational force and the institutional and economic reconstruction of the country.

The President: While waiting for the representative of the United Kingdom to speak, allow me to make a brief statement in my capacity as the representative of the Philippines.

We attach great importance to the reconstruction of Iraq. We are also convinced that the United Nations is playing a role in the political process leading to the establishment of a permanent Government in Iraq. It is critically important that the political process for restoring sovereignty to Iraq is fully accepted and supported by the people of Iraq.

As many have stressed within and outside the United Nations, Iraqi ownership of the process must be a guiding principle in this exercise. The legitimacy of the process in the eyes of the Iraqi people will be a key element in ensuring that democracy and stability take deep root in the country. We have an important role to play in achieving this goal.

Our approaches to this objective might diverge, but one thing is clear: Iraq requires the participation and cooperation of the international community, the United Nations plans and programmes, and other stakeholders to place Iraq on track to peace and stability. The leading role of the United Nations in this effort will be the critical foundation of a diplomatic consensus among all major players to extend help in the Iraqi reconstruction. Our efforts will be futile without the input of those who will be directly affected by our actions: the Iraqi people themselves. The Security Council thus benefits immensely from the presence here today of Minister Zebari, who has provided us with a clear presentation on the desires and aspirations of the Iraqi people to the establishment of a new Iraq.

Whatever action the Council may take, it should consider the various elements that Minister Zebari explained, especially on allowing the Iraqi people freely to determine their own political future. There are many issues that demand our attention. Many of them will have to be discussed and debated in later days, either in this forum or in other forums that we will have on Iraq, but the Council will certainly be guided by what the Iraqis themselves need, as Minister Zebari told us. The points he raised and his responses to questions by Council members are elements that we should ponder as the Council deliberates on a draft resolution that spells out the framework of action for Iraq.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): I am sorry about the unorthodox order of my presentation.

May I join those colleagues who have welcomed Minister Zebari's presence with us and, in particular, the words he addressed to us today, which were very powerful and moving. I think this is an occasion for all of us to see, rightfully in this Chamber, a representative of Iraq deliver that sort of message.

We are also particularly grateful to Lakhdar Brahimi for what he has done and the key role he played in actually facilitating the production of what has been described as the best possible outcome achievable. What we now need is the maximum support of the international community and for all of us to support Iraq, its Government and its people.

I particularly welcome Minister Zebari's very strong endorsement of the draft text on the table. I read very carefully the comments he made on it and I was struck that the points he emphasized are points which the Council has addressed and which, I believe, are in the process of being fully reflected in the text that is before us. It is right that the text should emphasize that full sovereignty, without any qualification in the security dimension or elsewhere, will pass to the people of Iraq and to the Government which is now coming into being. It is right that the United Nations should take on the leading role in the political process. The Minister put forward very clearly the view of the incoming Government that the multinational force is necessary, that it is needed and that it is wanted.

It is on that basis — the prior condition for the presence of the force to continue — that this Council should give a fresh mandate for that operation to continue. But it should do so in a way that demonstrates that the force will operate in partnership with the Government, that there will be a process set in train and that both the draft resolution before us and the letter which we expect very soon from the Prime Minister of Iraq will set out precisely how the Government wants the force to operate. This partnership should be based on an understanding that a national security council should tackle the big issues and should work to get agreement on precisely how the force should carry out certain operations and the broad strategic direction for the operation of the multinational force.

Minister Zebari laid stress on sovereignty, but none of that process is inconsistent either with Iraq's having full sovereignty or, at that same time — as the Minister recognized, and I hope colleagues heard this very clearly — with the troops having the right of self-defence and the detailed implementation of operations resting under the military command of the multinational force. That is my understanding of the partnership. I am pleased that the Minister seems to have exactly the same perception of that and that it should come through very clearly in the draft resolution which we will adopt quite soon and in the letter which actually sets out, as I said before, the Government's wishes — that is to say, Iraqi security forces answering to the Minister's Government.

In the view of the British Government, however, if consent for the multinational force is withdrawn, then the pillar on which the force is based also falls. It would be clear that the force could not continue, but that is not the emphasis that any of us wants to put on it. The Minister has rightly put it in the positive — the positive that Iraq needs and wants this force and that that is why we have a partnership.

The partnership has to go much wider. It is what the international community must now do: to rally behind Iraq and to support Minister Zebari and the courage that he and is colleagues are displaying to take Iraq through this interim stage, through elections and to end of a political process. I think the United Nations can do more, give him every support in that endeavour and wish him every success with it.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, Mr. Hoshyar Zebari, to respond to questions from Council members.

Mr. Zebari (Iraq): I will start answering the questions in order.

First, to my good friend the Ambassador of Algeria, I will speak in Arabic.

(*spoke in Arabic*)

I thank him for his kind words. The draft resolution is extremely important to us in Iraq, to the region and to other Arab countries. With regard to the questions that he raised, I should like to state that the current wording of the draft resolution on the nature of the sovereignty, the terms of reference of the Government and so on is quite adequate. Our understanding of sovereignty is that it would be for and

enjoyed by the Iraqi people and that the Government should run its own affairs, be free to make its own decisions and have control over Iraqi security affairs. It should also control the country's financial resources and represent the Iraqi people in international forums.

As for its terms of reference, as I mentioned in my statement earlier, we understand that the ongoing presence of the multinational force is needed more by Iraq than by the United States, the United Kingdom or Poland. We need that force and I have so stated very clearly to Arab leaders and Ministers for Foreign Affairs, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the League of Arab States.

The dangers are great and will be exacerbated if a security vacuum should be created. We are not yet prepared; we have not completed our security or military preparations sufficiently to be able to say good-bye to the multinational force. At this point — we say this very clearly, without any hesitation or feeling of shame — we are more concerned about the fate of many thousands of Iraqis, about the country's future and about the situation in the country. It is important to us that Iraqi forces be under Iraqi leadership. We should use our imagination to achieve a kind of coordination among Iraqi forces and their leadership and the leaders of the multinational force so that they can work together as partners in meeting the security threats confronting us.

There will definitely be correspondence between the Iraqi interim Government and the Security Council, and the continued presence of the multinational force will definitely depend upon Iraqi approval — as opposed to the situation under resolution 1483 (2003) or 1511 (2003), in which the multinational force was there as an occupying force, against the wishes of the Iraqi people. This time, the force will be there by approval of the representatives of the Iraqi people. This is all I can say about that.

(*spoke in English*)

The representative of China asked two questions concerning what we need to see in this draft resolution. In my statement, I believe I enumerated the points that are important for us. But, to repeat them briefly, I think we need the draft resolution to be clear and unambiguous and to reflect full sovereignty very clearly. In particular, the people of Iraq need to see that this is a genuine transfer of sovereignty and authority to them, not a cosmetic attempt in that process. It is very important that the people feel and see that. So any language to consolidate and help us get to that point would be very welcomed by us.

The following is a point that I highlighted in my statement. Yes, we need the multinational force to help us, we need the Council's efforts, we need assistance from Member States and from the rest of the international community. Iraq is no longer a local issue; it has become a regional and international issue. In fact, when we speak of the main front in the war against international terrorism, that is real to us; we feel it, we sense it. We are in the trenches every day. Iraq is not like other countries such as Afghanistan or Somalia. In fact, the collapse of the Iraqi State would have a huge impact on the entire region and on the Council's interests as well. We have constantly told those of our neighbours who believe that continued instability in Iraq will be in their interests that they are making a fatal mistake. We have all seen the recent spate of terrorist attacks in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria and Istanbul, and that is just the beginning if we lose this battle, this confrontation. This is really a struggle between two wills regarding what kind of country we want to establish.

Of course, we really want clear references to the status of the multinational force, to their operations and to their relations of cooperation with the Iraqi interim Government in a spirit of partnership. At this stage — here, I will be very honest, one can ask any member of the Iraqi Government or any Iraqi politician about this — a call for immediate withdrawal or a fixed deadline or timetable would be very, very unhelpful. It would be used by enemies to complicate the problems even further. If we are ready to assume responsibility, it can be done as soon as possible. But, as we can see, these attacks have a pattern: they are all politically motivated. As we pass through each stage, we see that the forces that want to derail this process are coming back and playing politics with bombs and suicide missions.

We also really need the sovereign Iraqi Government to have control national resources and the country's finances. It would be difficult to justify the operation of a sovereign Government if that Government were not able to manage its own finances. So I believe Iraq needs to be represented fully in whatever mechanisms or supervisory boards are envisaged in that area so that it can have an important or leading role in that regard.

In addition, because we really cannot operate in a legal vacuum, we want a reference or an acknowledgement to the effect that the Transitional Administrative Law is very important for us, because every step that we take now or in the future will be implemented under that Law.

These are our main points. We welcome a very important and central role for the United Nations in this process. In fact, in the political, electoral and reconstruction processes, we will need the United Nations in many ways. I think there is now a greater realization that the United Nations has an important role to play than when we experienced difficulties in December or January. Yes, that role is dangerous and challenging, but when has the United Nations not carried out its work in difficult circumstances? We welcome that role. I believe that Mr. Brahimi and the recent United Nations mission did a remarkable job. It was risky and very dangerous for the members of the team, but they rose to the challenge, and we are very proud of their positive and constructive re-engagement.

Our friend the representative of Germany raised a number of questions, and I will address them. But I would also like to make a number of comments, because we think it is important to clarify several things.

We are here as the representative of the Iraqi interim Government, and we can speak on behalf of the Prime Minister and the new arrangements. We did not read the text only a couple of days ago; we read it weeks ago, when it was first distributed, and we are completely familiar with it. We could take an examination on it, explaining, item by item, what the draft resolution entails and what it contains, because this is not an academic exercise for us; this is our future. So we definitely know what we are talking about and what is at risk.

Secondly, I would say that we in the new Iraqi Government are open to any consultation, at whatever level the Council deems necessary, as it is very important for us to reach out to as many people, as many members as possible.

I answered some of the questions posed by the representative of Germany, but let me say this with respect to his two main questions on the principal two elements that we need to see in any arrangement or agreement to regulate relations between the Iraqi interim Government and the multinational force. I think that for us the first element is very important — that Iraqi forces, the military, the police, security forces, intelligence and whatever other arrangements exist should come under Iraqi control and Iraqi command, and that they not be part and parcel of the multinational force or under foreign command. We are talking about full sovereignty. I think that we should say that very clearly and loudly.

There is also an understanding from our friends and allies. They are helping us to build these forces. They are investing money, giving assistance and making sacrifices to train our police, our army and so on. But leading up to that we need our own command, let us say, to be there and to liaise or coordinate through certain structures. I think that this is the first condition.

The second principle is that we think that the Iraqi interim Government and the Iraqi transitional Government really should have a say about the final status of these forces. We need them. The question is a hypothetical one. I think that we are going to need these forces for quite some time, but, as a sovereign Government, we must definitely have a say in that respect; it will not be open-ended forever. But we must have a say in the duration of the mandate of these forces. I think these are the two elements that we have tried to explain.

I think that the Prime Minister, Mr. Ayad Allawi, and the Cabinet held their official meeting today and addressed this issue frankly today. We have been in constant consultation and contact with them and are considering preparing those letters on behalf of the Iraqi interim Government.

I appreciate very much the comments of the Ambassador of France, and I also enjoyed very much our discussion this morning and the exchange of views. I appreciate his support for the draft resolution's being adopted by consensus, to show the people of Iraq and of the world that the Security Council is united in its desire to see a truly sovereign Iraqi Government assuming real authority and power and overcoming current difficulties. I think that is a shared objective that we in Iraq highly appreciate and for which we express our thanks.

The Ambassador of Chile raised a number of questions. I will start with the last one, about the fate of the militias. We have been working for some time with the Combined Joint Task Force and the Coalition

Provisional Authority to dissolve them and, according to the transitional administrative law, to abolish or to put an end to all militias, whoever they are made up of, that are working and operating outside of the law. That includes Shi'a and Kurdish political parties, and integrating all of those militias into the new Iraqi army and the new Iraqi army formations.

The process has already started. One of the problems that we have faced recently with Moqtada Al-Sadr is the use of violence and arms to prove a point or to see recognition. Our position has been that there is really another way to be represented: the political process is open, and if one seeks recognition, there are elections and other ways to do it. One does not need to resort to violence in order to make a point.

That is the position of the Iraqi interim Government. There will be no place — no room — for militias in Iraq, apart from the one Iraqi army and the police forces. Yes, we do need our country to have control over security, authority over security, and this has been an issue we have discussed. We have differed sometimes with our Coalition friends. Security is a complex issue. It is not only the use of force; it definitely involves intelligence, political and economic issues, the closure of borders — so it is a multifaceted approach, the way we see it. We are making progress in training and in getting better intelligence. In particular, many new security agencies have been established recently. The Defence Ministry has been re-established, and the National Intelligence Service has been re-established. We are making progress with the border police and with the other military and security formations.

I will skip some of the questions, because I have answered some of them. I will go through some of the questions posed and remarks made by the Ambassador of Pakistan. I referred to 400 political parties, groups and associations. That is the number that we have managed to count; it is an ongoing process. One definitely cannot include everyone, but in the context of the political process the political conference is coming up, which will include others. We will have the elections — the local electoral commissions, let us say — in which they can participate. We are not trying to be exclusive; we are trying to be inclusive. But one definitely cannot include every Iraqi political, tribal or religious leader.

I think I have answered the question about the time frame. I tried to answer the question about the partnership. Concerning the reference to the arms embargo in the draft text, I think that this is the first time this has come up, which is a very hopeful sign for Iraq, which was under embargo for so many years under the previous regime — at least there is an opening, and we should build on that.

Concerning the international development fund monitoring board, I think we have discussed this issue with our friends, and we are going to raise it. Yes, we need a stronger Iraqi representation on that board and we must have a stronger say and not be merely symbolically represented. In fact, we need to be strongly represented on that board.

On the question of neighbours — the neighbours are very important and helpful, and we should engage them. I personally attended the most recent conference of Iraq's neighbouring countries, and our relations are very good. I would describe them as very progressive with all the countries — with Iran, Turkey, Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. We have been informing them and explaining to them how important Iraq's security and stability is, and we need their cooperation, we need their support. They can play a very constructive role in helping us stabilize, and we have introduced our list to them — what they can do to help us. We are reaching out to them, but at the same time it is very important — as, I think, they understand — that we, the Iraqi people, should freely determine our political future without anything being dictated or imposed, while at the same time respecting their legitimate national security interests in the region. That is how we are dealing with that issue.

With regard to the other question put by the representative of the Russian Federation, I have described the United Nations role we expect. We need a leading role for the United Nations: a truly engaged, positive role. That will not be easy, and assistance is needed from the Security Council and from Member States at large. Terrorists, who are blinded by hatred and a culture of death and killing, make no distinctions among humanitarian organizations and their representatives, Western diplomats or military commanders in the field. All of them have become "legitimate" targets for terrorists, and they need security and protection for their operations and their facilities. I think the draft resolution very clearly

addresses the need for a unit of multinational forces to protect such operations and installations.

On the question of weapons of mass destruction and the International Atomic Energy Agency, we understand that this issue is still outstanding — left over from previous resolutions. We have discussed it among ourselves in the new Administration. But at this stage it is too soon to address it.

The idea of an international conference has been on the table for quite some time. We Iraqis want as much international support and aid as possible to help us achieve our goal of a stable, peaceful and prosperous country. In my personal view — and I will be very honest and direct — I think an international conference is long overdue. Such a conference should have taken place much, much earlier. Now, I think, we have passed the time: we have a political plan; we have other arrangements. If we compare our situation with that of Afghanistan for instance, I think the time gap becomes apparent. Let us also answer the question of what a conference would achieve in terms of consolidating international support and involvement. We are asking for those things publicly and openly, with the United Nations as the main body in that connection. We have welcomed the United Nations; we have called on the United Nations; we have urged the United Nations to be re-engaged and to come and help us. In my personal view, internationalizing the issue could complicate the matter, although there are so many ways in which Member countries can help, bilaterally or through the Security Council or the United Nations.

Finally, I appreciated very much the kind words of the representative of the United Kingdom.

I think I have answered all the questions. I thank Council members for their patience.

The President: I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq for the clarifications he has provided.

There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.